

New Law Prohibits Texting and Cell Phone Use by Teen Drivers

As the 27th state to pass a texting ban, Vermont has taken the U.S. another step closer to a nationwide prohibition on texting while driving. Going further than some other states, the law also forbids all cell phone use for drivers up to age 18 and younger. A law being debated in New York would force all cabbies to stop using cell phones.

Research compiled by the National Highway Safety Administration (NHTSA) attributed an estimated 6,000 deaths and half-a-million injuries to distracted driving in 2008 alone. No doubt these numbers have gone up since that time as even more people are using their smart phones for all manners of communication and web browsing. Distracted driving is a huge problem for all drivers including truck drivers.



CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES

“My wife, two kids and myself were involved in a rollover in our SUV. My soul mate and the mother of our children died out on the highway in front of two of our kids. I don’t know where we would be without Chad and the Firm. I was not able to support my kids at the wreck because my neck was broken. When I got to Chad and the Firm I was really low and just did not know what to do with my life and my kids. Chad not only worked on my case but he talked to me about everything that was going on. Chad became my friend and I still talk with him now. I can’t imagine where me and the kids would be today without Chad and the Firm. Thanks for everything to Chad, Tony and Marisol.”

Randy Burns



CLIENT SUCCESS STORIES

Tony and his staff did a heck of a job helping me after my motorcycle wreck. When the insurance company first tried to blame me for the wreck, Tony fought them and got them to change their decision. Then, when it came time to settle my case, Tony again forced the insurance company to give me what I deserved. If I am ever in another wreck I will definitely be calling Tony.

Damon R. – Houston, Texas

What is the Real Path to Success in Our Lives?

“A goal properly set is halfway reached.” – Abraham Lincoln

All successful journeys begin the same way – with goal setting. To “properly set” a goal as President Lincoln refers in his quote means this - you have to write down your goals. It is not enough to simply think about your goals or to dream about them. To make your goals a reality, you have to write them down and develop a plan of action to accomplish them and make them happen. The fact is this – **WRITING DOWN YOUR GOALS IS THE REAL PATH TO SUCCESS IN OUR LIVES!**

Almost all successful people write down their goals. Set realistic goals that are measurable. The goals need to be specific, like saving money. Set a goal like saving a set amount of money each month. By analyzing your budget you may find ways to save that money. Not only is this goal realistic but it is measurable because you can gauge your progress.

Reviewing your goals daily is crucial to your success. Put a copy up in your closet, stick it on your refrigerator, fold up a copy and put it in your wallet. Look at your goals throughout your day to keep you focused. Tell everyone in your family about your goals and get them involved in helping you achieve them. Teach them the importance of writing down their goals as well!

COMMON QUESTIONS

Q: I have had an accident that wasn’t my fault, do I even need an attorney?

A: One thing needs to be clear; the insurance company of the driver that caused the wreck is not going to look out for your best interests. Don’t be fooled by the pleasant, smooth talk of the adjuster. If you have damage to your vehicle and you are hurt, you are going to need an attorney to look out for you and your family to get the compensation you need.

If you are seriously injured you are more concerned about healthcare and taking care of yourself than worrying about preserving evidence. The insurance company surely won’t look out for evidence that will help you. That is where our team is most vital to put to work on your case. Our staff and team of outside professionals know exactly what needs to be done to preserve the evidence needed to succeed on your case.

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TRUCK WRECKS ARE DEVASTATING

In 2008 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), the U.S. Department of Transportation reported 441 fatalities and 7,883 injuries caused by tractor-trailers in Texas truck wrecks. That means that in just one year, more than 8,000 families suffered the physical, emotional, and financial problems caused by Texas truck accidents.

Tractor-trailers are among the largest trucks on the road and often cause the most catastrophic crash injuries. Experienced truck wreck attorneys understand the significant injuries and liability issues that are common to many truck wrecks.

Truck wrecks are different than other types of motor vehicle accidents for two important reasons. First, trucks are often owned by a trucking company, not the driver. Therefore, the potential liability for damages may extend to a company and/or the truck driver depending on the cause of the accident. Second, the injuries are often greater than in a car crash. Thus, it is even more important to obtain a fair and just recovery to pay for the physical, emotional and financial damages caused by the truck wreck.

Call us immediately if you or someone you know is injured by a truck.



Trucker Fatigue and Truck Crashes

When a truck driver does not get enough rest, driver fatigue can set in and cause the trucker to fall asleep at the wheel. Truck wrecks can cause the occupants of the other vehicle to sustain substantial injuries, and may even cause death. There are many causes of truck accidents, but trucker fatigue has become a serious safety concern. Research indicates that trucker fatigue is the cause of truck wrecks 30 to 40 percent of the time.

Trucking Rules

The Federal Motor Safety Administration (FMVSA) regulates the operation of commercial trucks. Hours-of-Service (HOS) Regulations limit the amount of time a driver may operate a truck. The goal of HOS rules is to decrease truck fatalities. According to HOS Regulations, a trucker can only drive a maximum of eleven hours after ten consecutive hours off duty, and a driver who uses a sleeper berth must spend at least eight consecutive hours in it and an additional two consecutive hours, off duty, or a combination of both.

Why Trucker Fatigue Causes Accidents

Although HOS Regulations limit the amount of time a driver can continuously operate a truck before taking a break, trucker fatigue continues to be a serious problem and a leading cause of truck wrecks. According to a 2006 Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) study, 21 percent of truck drivers in 2005 admitted that they had fallen asleep while driving. This was a 50 percent increase from the 2001 data, which showed that only 13 percent of drivers admitted to falling asleep at the wheel. Surveys conducted by the IIHS in 2004 and 2005 found that drivers spent more time driving, either in violation of HOS rules or because of changes to HOS Regulations. The survey showed that one in five drivers began driving longer hours after HOS rules changed to allow longer driving time. The survey also concluded that three-quarters of drivers admitted to violating either the limits on maximum working hours or the limits on maximum driving hours.



Tire Safety

Since it is summer it is of course very hot outside and many of you will be taking summer driving trips with your family. Heat plus long distance driving can often equal a tire failure. The most dangerous type of defective condition in a tire is tread separation. This occurs when the tread of the tire literally peels off the sidewall and body of the tire. Tire manufacturers have long known that a simple and cheap fix exists to stop tread separations – nylon cap plies. This is simply a piece of nylon that is wrapped around the tire over the top of the steel belts in the tire.

This does two things: stop corrosion and reduce the tendency of the edges of the steel belts to break free from the rubber. This is simple and easy for the tire manufacturers to do. You need to do your part as well. Routinely check the tire pressure in your car and especially do this before any long trip. Keep your tires inflated to the pressure that is shown on the tire placard usually stuck to the inside door jam of your car. Also, never overload your vehicle and put stress on your tire. Any time you run into a curb or hit a pothole very carefully inspect your tires for damage. Look closely all around the tires for damage. If you see damage replace the tire. Finally, be very careful about tire repair. We do not recommend that you ever repair a tire. If the tire is damaged or punctured or routinely loses air the tire needs to be replaced. Many national chains will repair tires with a plug system if the puncture is in the tread area. You should never repair a tire that is punctured on the sidewall portion of the tire. Again, be very careful with repairs as this can alter the integrity of the tire. Tires are where the rubber meets the road – literally. Think about it, the only part of your car, truck or SUV touching the road surface is the rubber of the tires. You have to take care of those tires and make sure you purchase the right tires in the first place. Always, always try to determine whether a particular tire has a nylon cap ply and buy those tires.



BREAKING NEWS

The Firm has recently greatly upgraded our website. We believe it is the best resource on the internet for folks that have been injured in a truck wreck, car wreck, motorcycle wreck or by an unsafe car or other product.

On the site you can also download a copy of our FREE informational book entitled, What Every Houston Accident Victim Needs to Know. This book contains valuable information for people on topics such as what you must do at the scene of an accident,

how to deal with your healthcare providers, what you can expect in the litigation process and the sometimes confusing and frustrating concept of subrogation and liens on your recovery.

The site is also loaded with articles regarding all kinds of wreck and accident scenarios, news, recalls and other information that is valuable and will help you learn about what you need to do when you are involved in an accident. If you are reading this newsletter you already know what to do if you, a loved one or a friend is injured – call Denena & Points. We all thank you for the trust you place in us when you allow us to handle your case.